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30 DEC 1950

The Honorable F. J. Lawton
Director
Bureau of the Budget
Executive Office of the President
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lawton:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of 26 December 1950 requesting the views of this Agency on the subject of establishing a board similar to the Defense Communications Board or the Board of War Communications of the World War II years.

In order to avoid confusion relative to the position of this Agency, I am enclosing a copy of a letter dated 24 November 1950 to the Chairman of the President's Communications Policy Board in response to what appears to be a similar inquiry. I have designated representatives who are presently engaged in discussions with the President's Communications Policy Board on this subject.

As indicated in the enclosure, this Agency feels that an independent government agency should be established to coordinate and supervise communications facilities in the interests of national security. The details of composition, status and responsibility of such an agency should, I believe, be determined through coordination with and between those departments and agencies of the Government having a primary interest in the communications field.

Sincerely,

#16-55

WALTER B. SMITH
Director

Encl.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

November 24, 1950

Dr. Irvin Stewart
Chairman
President's Communications Policy Board
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Dr. Stewart:

The President's Communications Policy Board Publications Numbers 1 and 2 have been studied in this Agency in connection with the letter from the Board dated 16 October 1950 requesting our views on matters considered to be relevant to the broad mission of the Board.

In the opinion of this Agency, the establishment of an independent Communications Policy Board within the Executive structure of the Government is necessary. Such a Board would provide a means, now lacking, to formulate and supervise the execution and administration of national communications policy essential to the national security.

The present situation of the United States in world affairs requires a strong and highly efficient system of overseas communications controlled by United States interests and policy. Mergers of our overseas commercial communications facilities appears desirable as a major step in this direction from the standpoint of both competition with foreign controlled systems, and provision for any necessary emergency support of military operations.

A further necessary step involves provision for reliable and secure Government owned and operated facilities overseas for the transmission of certain diplomatic and other non-military, high priority communications where security may be a primary factor and neither commercial nor military facilities are adequate or sufficiently secure.

If considered desirable, I will be glad to designate a representative to discuss in more detail the basis for the statements above. Meanwhile, we appreciate the opportunity afforded to state our opinion in this most important field.

Sincerely,

/s/
WALTER D. SMITH
Director

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

DEC 26 1950

My dear General Smith:

The Bureau of the Budget has received several proposals to establish a Board similar to either the Defense Communications Board or the Board of War Communications of the World War II years. The Defense Communications Board was charged with planning to implement the President's responsibilities under Section 606 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, while the Board of War Communications executed these Presidential responsibilities, and also supervised execution of the responsibilities under Section 301 of the Act.

Presumably, composition of the proposed board would parallel that of its predecessors modified to reflect changes in the Government's structure since 1945.

It is requested that your views on this subject be submitted to the Bureau of the Budget not later than January 4, 1951. It is especially desired that these views include comments on the need for such an agency, the kinds of questions such an agency would have to consider, and the desired composition and status of such an agency.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) F. J. Lawton

Director

Lieut. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith
Director of Central Intelligence Agency
Washington 25, D. C.